



PLANNING AHEAD 2010 HURRICANE SEASON GUIDELINES

AFTER A STORM - IF YOU SHELTERED IN PLACE: What to Do After Wind Damage and Flooding Caused by Storm Surge and/or Rainfall

Much of this information was summarized from the FEMA Disaster Information web pages:
www.fema.gov/hazard

If you sheltered in place during the storm event:

- Expect the worst and take precautions to assure your safety. Use caution when opening doors or windows, and keep children and pets inside.
- Use the telephone sparingly except for emergencies.
- Keep a battery-powered radio with you so you can listen for emergency updates, disaster relief instructions and news reports.
- Learn whether the water supply is safe to drink before you ingest tap water. Eat only foods you are absolutely sure are safe. If power has been out, food that was refrigerated or frozen may not be safe to eat.
- Use care handling power tools, gas lanterns, generators, candles and matches.
- Stay off the streets. Roads should be left clear for emergency vehicles and debris removal equipment. Debris-filled streets are dangerous.
- If you must walk or drive, be on the look out for fallen objects and stay on firm ground. Moving water only 6 inches deep can sweep you off your feet.
 - Avoid flooded areas. Water may be contaminated by oil, gasoline, or raw sewage. Water may also be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.
 - Stay away from downed power lines, and report them to the power company.
 - Flood debris may hide animals and broken bottles, and can also be slippery. Avoid walking or driving through it.
 - If you come upon a barricade, go another way. Cones or barricades have been placed in that location for your protection.

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- Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded. Coastal soils may erode beneath pavement or bridge supports and collapse under the weight of a car.
- Watch out for frightened or dangerous domestic animals and wildlife on your property or in common areas. Use a stick to poke debris to flush out reptiles.
- If your home is still on a septic tank and it may be damaged, service the tank as soon as possible. Damaged sewage systems are serious health hazards.
- Check your home for damage. Use a battery-powered flashlight to inspect your home. Take photos of the “after the storm” conditions.

- **Electrical systems:** Turn off the electricity at the main breaker or fuse box, even if the power is off in your community, unless you are wet, standing in water, or unsure of your safety. That way, you can decide when your home is dry enough to turn it back on.

If the situation is unsafe (you notice sparks, for example), leave the building and call for help. Do not turn on the lights until you are sure they are safe to use. If you have any doubts about the integrity of your electrical system, have it checked by an electrician before turning on the power.

- **Water and sewage systems:** Check with local authorities before using any water; the water could be contaminated. Do not flush toilets until you know that sewage lines are intact.
- **Appliances and Electronics:** If appliances are wet and the power is still on, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker. Then, unplug appliances and let them dry out. Have them checked by a professional before using them again. If the power is out, turn off the electricity to appliances and unplug electronics so that they are not damaged by possible power surges once electricity is restored.
- **Food and other supplies:** Throw out all food and other supplies that you suspect may have become contaminated or come in to contact with floodwater.
- **Open cabinets:** Be alert for objects that may fall. Remove contents and check for moisture damage. .
- **Clean up household items:** Disinfect items that may have been contaminated by raw sewage, bacteria, or chemicals. Clean and disinfect everything salvageable that got wet in the floodwater.

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- Call your insurance agent. File a claim if your home is damaged, ask for an adjuster to be sent to your property, and request financial help. Keep good records of repair and cleaning costs, and include before and after photos of your home and possessions.
- Listen to your emergency radio for information on assistance that may be provided by the Village, state or federal government, or other organizations.
- Be aware that unlicensed, unqualified or unscrupulous workers often arrive in disaster areas to assist in clean up or repair work. Be sure anyone you hire is qualified to do the job. Check references.